

Vocationalizing: What Shelters Can Do to Support Client Employment Goals

December 2013

King County Moving Home Academy

Welcome

Introductions

- Building Changes
- Nick Codd
- Sarah Cotton Rajski
- YOU!

Learning Objectives

- I. Understand *Vocationalizing* at staff and program level
- II. Increase understanding of key players and their unique role in this work including the King County Employment Navigator and WorkFirst programs
- III. Increase staff skills and expertise to support clients to increase income

Context

Why Employment?

ONE EXAMPLE

Three person family on TANF

TANF cash benefit = \$478.00

Three person family with employment

40 hours week/minimum wage = \$1,470.40 (gross)

Note: *still eligible for food stamps, childcare subsidy*

Change

- System
- Shift in focus and resources to rapid re-housing (*\$3M for RRH pilot started Dec. 1, 2013*)
- Housing options for your clients
- Pathway to permanent housing and what housing looks like (*market rate; non section 8*)
- Roles

Homeless Housing System



New Housing Option

Rapid Re-housing services are designed to transition homeless families into permanent housing by offering:

- Housing Services and Rent Subsidy
- Case Management
- Individualized Employment Assistance

Values

- Families have the ability to obtain market rate housing supported by earned income with rental assistance functioning as a short term intervention
- Families have the ability to acquire and sustain housing without relying on extended or permanent rental subsidies
- Families have the ability to get and keep jobs within a career pathway which support the financial needs of the family (*rent, childcare, food and transportation*)

Values

- Paying more than 30% of income on housing and/or accepting entry level employment within a career track may be a necessary starting point
- Families move out of homelessness primarily as a result of their own efforts by utilizing their skills, social supports and personal attributes; homeless housing services facilitate this process and complements a family's efforts, actions and abilities

Activity

Values and Assumptions



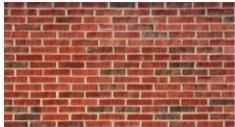
ROCK: Something that is hard for you to wrap your mind around how this can be achieved



LIGHTBULB: Something that is insightful; an “aha” to you



GAMECHANGER: Something that is pivotal and will change the direction of the future significantly for the program and/or agency



BRICK WALL: The biggest challenge or obstacle to overcome within the culture of the agency or within implementation at the programs



HEART: Something you just really love and resonate with

Vocationalizing

Vocationalizing

- Shifting to a culture of ability and high expectations
- Establishing a “culture of work”
- Incorporating a strengths based approach to services
- Integrating a focus within your services to support families to become employed
- Improving employment outcomes within current agency structure

Vocationalized Means

- Staff have the skills, knowledge and resources to coordinate and deliver services that effectively support clients' employment goals
- Staff can increase client awareness of what they can achieve through employment/education
- Explicit tie to workforce system

Change on Multiple Levels

Community level

- Partnership development (with employers, WDC, DVR, employment providers, colleges, etc.)
- Participation in community planning processes

Organizational level

- Administrative leadership
- Vocationalize across agency departments/programs

Program delivery level

- New values and approach to the work
- Staff role expands to address client employment, education and training goals
- New skills, abilities and referral relationships

Program Perspective

- Employment is not something “they” (other staff) do, it’s something WE (all staff) do
- All staff are part of the employment team; *everyone can participate*
- Employment services are *integrated* with case management services
- Employment and housing are worked on concurrently as complimentary activities

Impact on Clients

- Opportunity exists despite length of stay
 - Talk about employment
 - Explore education / skill building
- Respect for individual's ability to make an informed choice about what they want
- Employment and housing are worked on concurrently as complimentary activities

Continuum

Being vocationalized can mean:

- Shift in approach and language used
- Integrated case management and employment services
- New employment services offered on site
- Agency has additional employment resources and referrals to workforce partners

Reflection

In context of what you have heard, what are you already doing around client employment goals?

Role of Workforce System

Workforce Providers: Make the Connection!



Employment Services Overview

Employment Service	Examples
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Skills/Abilities• Interests
Work Readiness Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resume, job search, networking, interviewing• Essential skills
Work Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transitional jobs• On-the-job training
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Short term, sector-based• Career pathway
Job Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employer connections, employer incentives• Job fairs, Job orders
Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sustaining employment• Wage progression, career advancement

WorkFirst

Parents receiving TANF participate in WorkFirst

Through WorkFirst, parents have access to services and partners:

- ✓ Assessment, work readiness and job search through the **Employment Security Department**
- ✓ Paid work experiences, work readiness and case management through the **Department of Commerce Community Job Providers**
- ✓ Training and education through the **Community and Technical Colleges**

WorkFirst

- Opportunity to increase resources for clients
 - ✓ Income
 - ✓ Employment
 - ✓ Education services
 - ✓ Support services
 - ✓ Childcare
- Support clients to get the most out of WorkFirst
 - ✓ IRP plan and requirements
 - ✓ WorkFirst case manager
 - ✓ WorkFirst Employment and Training services

LPA Leads

Planning Area	First Name	Last Name	Phone	Email
King County (East) LPA	Demetra	Biros	(425) 739-8315	demetra.biros@lwtech.edu
	Kevin	Gerhard	(425) 861-3746	kevin.gerhard@esd.wa.gov
King County (South) LPA	Ali	Scego	(253) 333-4976	ascego@greenriver.edu
	Tim	Fryer	(253) 288-5340	fryertl@dshs.wa.gov
King County (North) LPA	Danné	Broach	(206) 436-8613	dbroach@ywcaworks.org
	Dan	Story	(206) 934-7490	dan.story@dshs.wa.gov
Rainier, Capitol, Belltown LPA	Millicent	Blocquer	(206) 721-5987	mblocquer@esd.wa.gov
	Kendrick	Stewart	(206) 760-2333	kendrick.stewart@dshs.wa.gov
Renton LPA	Ene-Liis	Arrowsmith	(425) 793-5740	arrowe@dshs.wa.gov
	Debbie	Stolberg	(425) 793-5710	stolbdh@dshs.wa.gov

King County Navigators

- Role: support families to successfully participate in mainstream employment programs
- Individualized assistance: job search, job training and connecting to employment opportunities
- Coordinate services to support transition to employment and permanent housing
- Wage progression, career development and job retention

Providers

Career Connections: 2 navigators working with Solid Ground and Wellspring RRH families

Neighborhood House: 2 navigators working with Neighborhood House and Catholic Community Services RRH families

YWCA Works: 1 navigator working with YWCA and DAWN RRH families

Balance of Workforce System

- WorkSource
 - Open access employment services – for everyone
 - Self-directed services and workshops
 - WIA services including job training
- Community-based Organizations
 - Specialized employment and training programs
- Community and Technical Colleges
 - Adult Basic Education (ABE); GED
 - Sector training, certificate programs and education

King County WorkSource

- King County levy-funding: Homeless Employment Project
- Homeless Intervention Project
- *Dedicated staff person to work with homeless job seekers*

Locations / Contacts

Downtown Seattle

- YWCA: Theautrey Brown (206) 436-8601
tbrown@ywcaworks.org
- YWCA: Thuy-Linh Bui (206) 436-8607
thuylinh@ywcaworks.org

Renton

- YWCA: Angie Burnside (206) 678-6097
aburnside@ywcaworks.org

Auburn

- YWCA: Brianna Bradley (253) 329-7326
bbradley@ywcaworks.org

Locations / Contacts

Redmond

- TRAC Associates: Di King (425) 861-3736
- YWCA: Susan Truong (206) 496-4398
struong@ywcaworks.org

North Seattle Community College Opportunity Center for Employment and Education

- TRAC Associates: Johanna Hedge and Trina Thompson (Compass Housing Alliance Partner) (206) 934-6155

Rainier

- Neighborhood House

T

CBOs

YWCA

- Auburn Burndale Homes and Renton YWCA: Hazel Edwards (253) 736-0010 hedwards@ywcaworks.org

Neighborhood House

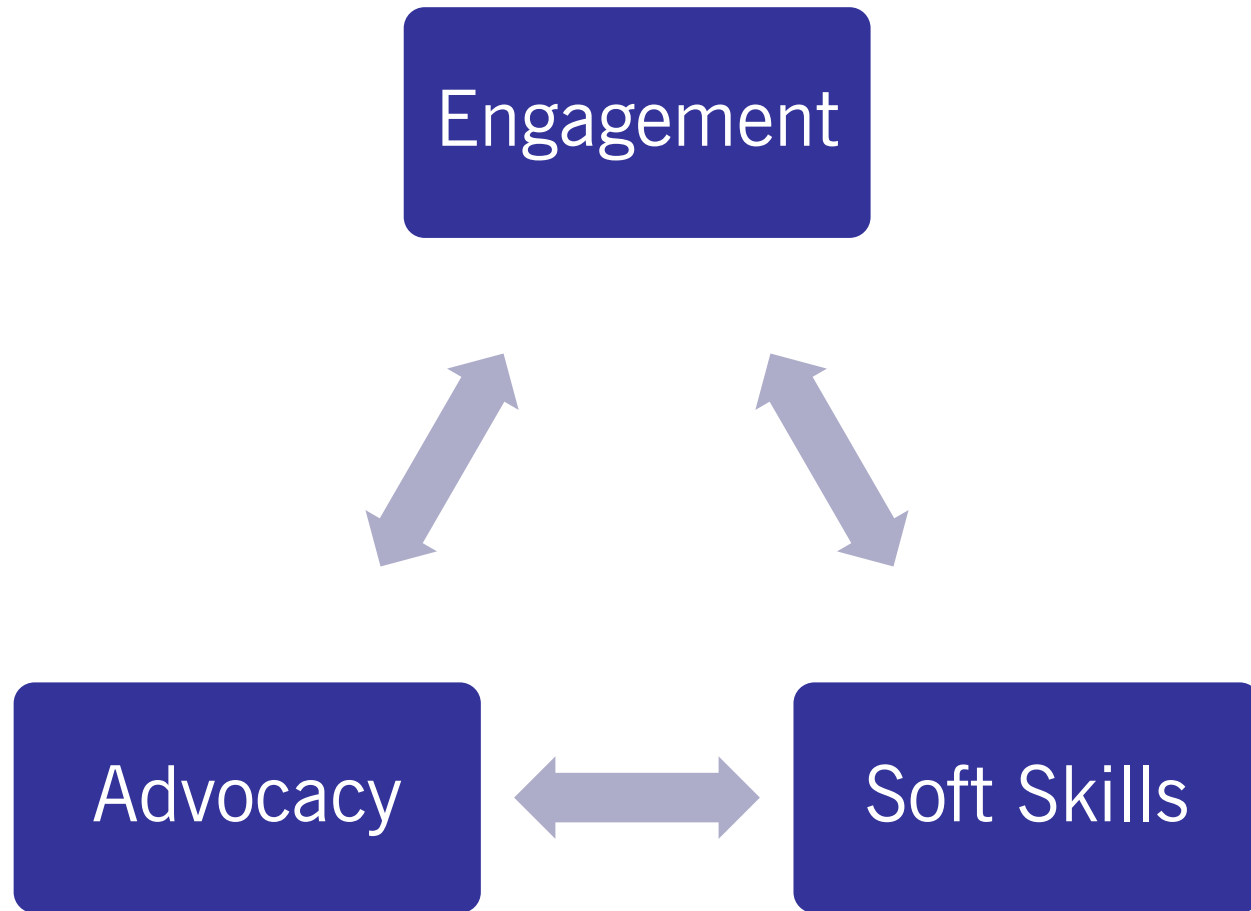
- Birch Creek Career Center: (253) 277-1667

Partners?

- What would you like your partnership to look like with workforce providers?
- What do you bring to the partnership?
- What role do workforce providers play in achieving your client employment goals?

Your Role

My Role in Vocational Services



Good News

- You may be doing some of this work already
- Ideas to build on
- Language to incorporate
- Attitude to embody

Engagement

The HOW

- Person centered
- Strength based
- Motivational interviewing skills

Build from Success

Think about a client that has experienced success in employment or educational, or a successful change in life ...

- What are the key ingredients of the positive experience?
- What strengths did the client show?

Where to Focus Energy?



Key Components

- Starting/holding the conversation
- Identifying strengths, skills and employability
- Making the housing and employment connection
- Instilling hope, developing optimism
- Addressing fears

What Do You Need To Know?

- Where client is currently
 - How does client feel?
 - Status to work in the US
 - Current job, programs
 - Participation in TANF/WorkFirst, SNAP
- Where client is headed
 - Goals, interests
 - Conditions required for work
- Where client has been
 - Employment, education, training
 - Legal history

Information Collecting Questions

- What is your source of income?
- Are you currently employed?
- If yes, do you need help getting a better job or increasing your hours?
- If no, are you working with a program that is helping you with your job search; what is the program?
- Are you currently looking for work?
- When did you last work? What type of work skills/training do you have?
- Are you involved in school or job training; are you interested in job training?

Open Ended Questions

- If you obtain housing and are provided with a few months of rental assistance, what type of job would you need to support your ongoing housing?
- What type of help do you need to obtain this type of job?
- How are you feeling about your job prospects?
- What are you excited about? What are you concerned about?

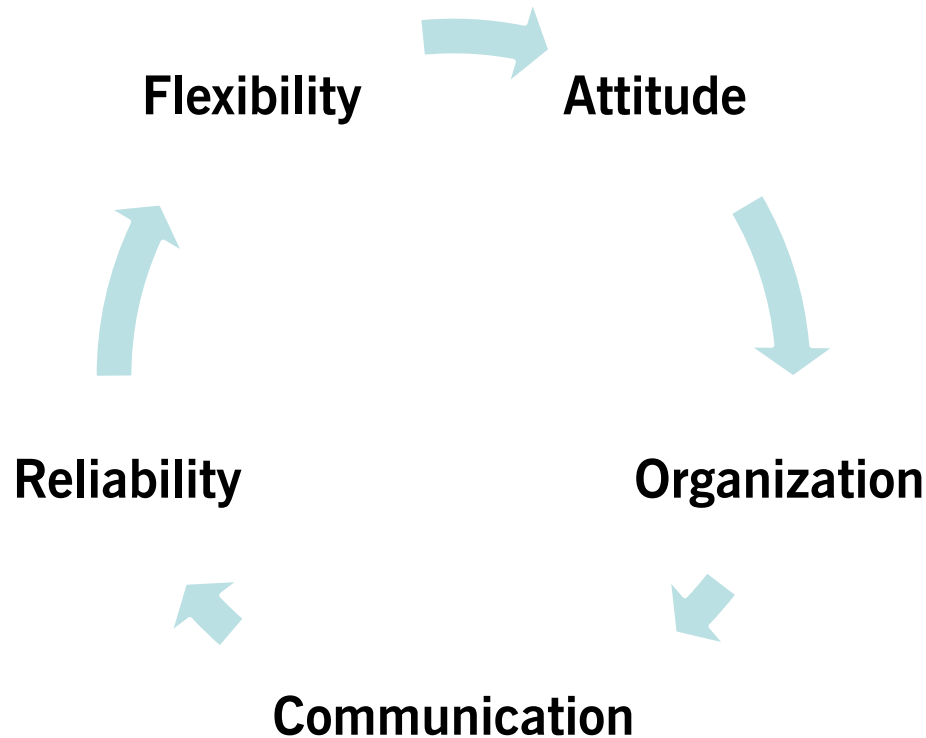
Your Take

- How do you engage clients around employment goals?
- How does the conversation sound?
- How do clients react?

Soft Skills

Soft Skills

Many employers report that hiring a candidate with good soft skills is just as important as someone with strong technical skills



You can make a difference here!

Addressing Key Soft Skills

Communication

- Phone and email access, responsiveness, etiquette
- Sociability, relating to others (boss, coworkers), understanding and sharing information

Reliability

- Transportation, work and school schedule, health

Organization

- Childcare and back up plan, clothing, documents and supplies needed for work

Your View

- Participation in case management services and follow through on agreed upon plans
- Level of stability in key areas (housing, childcare, healthcare, public assistance and legal matters)
- Participation in WorkFirst (if applicable)
- Participation in drug/alcohol or mental health treatment (if applicable)
- Non employment assessments and information
- General observation of client in different settings

Feedback

- Employment goals
- Identify skill areas in target job
- Resume
- Job interview
- Job performance

Employers hire based on strengths - not deficits

Style & Spirit

- Interaction is core to building relationships
- Don't make assumptions; ask for clarity
- Understanding motivation
- Shifting perspective on resistance to an opportunity for learning

Advocacy

What Am I Advocating For?

- Client
- Service coordination
- Connecting with workforce providers
- Partnerships

Supporting Change

- Change is the expected outcome of vocational work for clients and this can be intimidating
- Transition points are delicate
- It can put at risk the stability that has been achieved and the comforts of what is known
- Advocates provides the support, guidance and direction needed to facilitate change

Advocate / Get

	Advocate	Don't Advocate
Get		
Don't Get		

Participate?

- Introduce the topic early; continue to revisit as you may need bring it up again and again
- Look for natural or comfortable moments (*service plan development or review*); solution to a problem
- Be prepared for challenging conversations; anticipate the tough questions and scenarios
- Express confidence and have a plan

Example Tasks

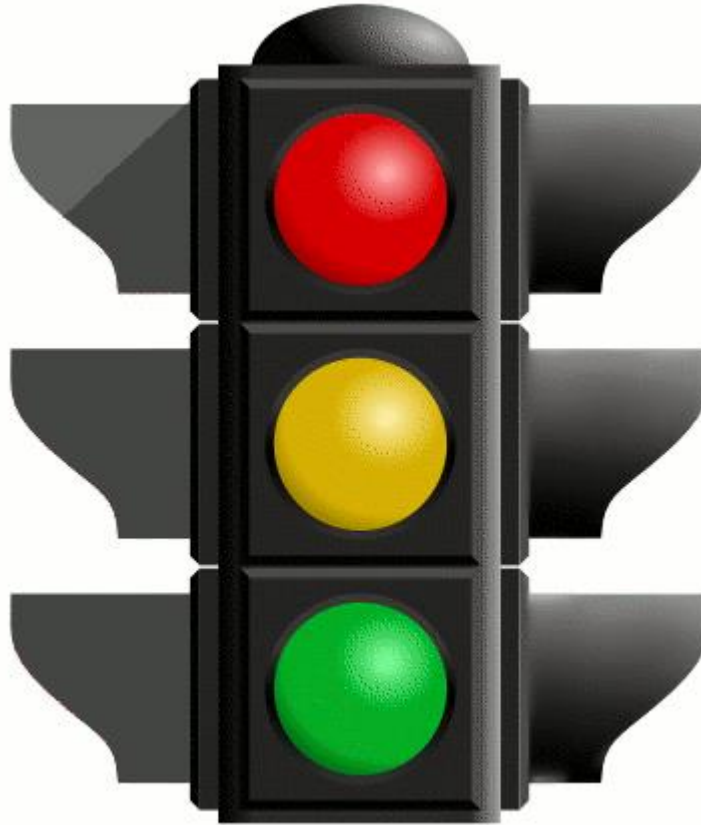
- Assist with obtaining Social Security card, State ID card and needed I-9 documents
- Shopping for interview or work clothes
- Assist with enrolling in job training or school
- Obtaining food handlers card
- Contact child support enforcement to modify agreement to encourage employment
- Business appropriate email address and voicemail
- Assist with online job application
- Resume and cover letter assistance

Partnerships: See the Opportunity

- Your role as a “translator”
- Employment Navigator
 - Specialized advocacy
 - Experts
- WorkFirst
 - Reframe mandated activities as an opportunity
 - Shift perception from compliance to progress

Conclusion

Where Are You?



Next Steps

Thank You

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